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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by the Reverend Dr. Guy Prentiss Waters of Fairhaven College, Jackson, MI.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Almighty God, You are infinitely wise, holy, and just. You are the one who has made us and the one who sustains us. Our conscience bears witness to Your righteous love.

We acknowledge that in Your providence You dispose of and govern over all things. You are the ruler of nations and You have appointed civil government for Your glory and the good of human beings.

We thank You for the work of civil government and acknowledge that those entrusted with this high responsibility stand under You. Be pleased to bless the work of our Senators this day. We would not presume upon Your blessing but ask that You might show mercy so that their work would be for this Nation's good and for Your glory.

Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

TAX INCREASE PREVENTION AND RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2005—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 4297, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference of the disagreeing votes on the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the bill (H.R. 4297), to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(b) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2006, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment and the Senate agree to the same, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of May 9, 2006.)

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there are 8 hours of debate equally divided on the conference report.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, in a moment, we will begin consideration of the conference report to accompany the Tax Relief Act. Our order from last night provides for up to 8 hours of debate from the statutory limit. The chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee will be on the floor throughout the day to yield some of that time to Senators to speak. I hope we will not need the entire 8 hours and that we could yield back some of that time and vote a little earlier today. We will see how we are progressing in the early afternoon and alert Members if that is possible and, indeed, I hope that it will be.

Following the vote on the adoption of the Tax Relief conference report, we

will have up to 1 hour of debate before the vote on invoking cloture on the small business health plans bill. If cloture is invoked on the small business health plans bill, then we would stay on that bill until we complete it. I hope the Senate will invoke cloture on the bill and will not miss the opportunity to help our small businesses provide more affordable health care benefits to their employees and families.

We have two important votes this afternoon. We will alert Senators as to the timing when we get a better idea of the amount of debate that is needed.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 2611

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that unless cloture is invoked on the pending substitute to S. 1955, on Monday, May 15, at a time to be determined by the majority leader after consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. 2611, the immigration bill. I further ask that when the Senate agrees to a request for a conference or the Senate requests a conference on this bill and the Chair is authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate, the ratio of conferees be 14 to 12; provided further that from that ratio, the first 7 Republican Senators from the Judiciary Committee and the first 5 Democratic Senators from the Judiciary Committee be conferees; finally, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader select the final 7 from the majority side and the Democratic leader select the final 7 from the minority side.

Before the Chair rules, I wish to be clear that the two leaders anticipate full session days on this bill, with a considerable number of amendments debated and voted on each day. We intend to allow amendments to come forward and to be voted on in an efficient way. This is a comprehensive immigration bill, and therefore it is important for Senators to have adequate time to have their amendments considered.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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